



SAGE

STATE HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION

EXHIBIT NO.

11

Commercial Driver Opportunities

SB-17-208

SB 359

FILE NO.

February 16, 2011

To Whom it May Concern,

SAGE Technical Services of Billings, Montana is a certified and accredited school for commercial truck driver training. Billings, Montana was the first of Thirty SAGE Truck Driver Training Schools to open it's doors in 1989. For the past 22 years SAGE has provided Commercial Driver Training programs that meet or exceed the highest industry standards.


Montana graduates are placed with Motor Carriers from Montana and our surrounding states in every mode of transportation. Employment opportunities are always abundant in oilfield, agricultural, local, regional and long-haul trucking. Our graduates have opportunities with companies such as Watkins Shepard, AG Express, US Express, Swift, Werner, Sanjel USA, Halliburton, Mitchell Oilfield Services, D&M Water Service, Briggs Distributors, Wheat Montana and DTS , to name just a few.

On any given day, SAGE receives dozens of calls from applicants wanting the opportunity to become a commercial driver and join the workforce in one of the top paying job markets for our state. Most applicants are unemployed or under employed seeking careers that offer higher wages and benefits. In recent years the lack of funding for certificate or short-term, direct to work vocational courses has made it more and more difficult for interested applicants to attend school and become a part of an industry that desperately needs drivers.

Montana's record high unemployment rates give a definite indicator that our residents need the funding to access the opportunities available in trucking. In past years programs such as W.I.R.E.D. or the TRA provided the funding for training. For the past year these programs are no longer available. The campus in Billings is enrolling more and more out of state applicants from Wyoming and the Dakotas to fill these jobs. Making funds available to Montana residents is critical to provide them the opportunity to access trucking jobs.

SAGE strongly supports the need to make funds available to Montana Veterans, their spouses, unemployed, underemployed and dislocated workers. We know it will make an immediate difference in our unemployment statistic if we are able to educate and put these people to work.

Sincerely,

  
Carmella Campanian